

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT:

UPDATE ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN THE EAL-RUN SCHOOLS IN BALTIMORE



PRODUCED BY
THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

555 NEW JERSEY AVENUE, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20001
202.879-4428 (DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH)

MARCH, 1996

Setting the Record Straight: Update On Student Achievement In the EAI-Run Schools in Baltimore

--Executive Summary--

Education Alternatives, Inc. (EAI) is a private, for-profit company that wants to manage public schools. EAI began 1995 with three contracts. A year later, it had none. EAI managed ten public schools (and provided limited, noninstructional services in two other Baltimore schools) from July 1992 through February, 1996. The five-year contract was abruptly halted by the city and school district in October, 1995. In 1995, EAI won a contract to manage the entire Hartford, CT school district, but by the end of the first year in Hartford, EAI's responsibilities were cut back to six schools. In January 1996, Hartford asked EAI for a "divorce", effectively terminating the contract. EAI also worked in Miami Beach at the South Pointe Elementary school for five years and had proposed to continue to work there, but schools officials chose to terminate their arrangements with the firm when the contract expired in June, 1995.

EAI argues that contracts in Hartford and Baltimore were canceled for financial and political reasons--not for lack of performance. The firm insists that student achievement was just starting to show big improvements. With no contract monitors or evaluators looking in, it has been easy to make such assertions. This report presents objective information to set the record straight and provide a wrapup on student performance in EAI-run schools. Data come from the Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS), EAI reports and documents, the third-party evaluation done by the University of Maryland Baltimore Campus (UMBC), and press reports.

EAI has displayed a pattern of releasing data that it claims show improvement, only to blame "mistakes" and "clerical errors" when the actual data reveal poor results. EAI's arguments presented above imitate this pattern of deliberate distortion and selective reporting of student performance data. A complete analysis of student performance data refutes the specious arguments EAI uses to sell its poor student performance record:

Myth: Test scores did go up -- dramatically.

Fact: Over the three years of EAI management, according to the UMBC evaluation, standardized achievement test scores (CTBS) for EAI schools decreased and then increased to about the preprogram level. Overall, a one point drop in reading was offset by a one point increase in math.

Myth: Tracking third graders who had spent three years in EAI-run schools shows that scores on a standardized achievement test rose 6.4 points in math and 4.8 points in reading. Scores for third graders in the rest of the city fell 5.7 points in math, and 4.7 points in reading.

Fact: UMBC evaluators point out that EAI's "three-year" longitudinal analysis is really a two-year longitudinal study. The base year of 1992-93 used by EAI, fails to capture the decline in scores from spring 1992 to spring 1993 during EAI's first year. The pre-implementation year of 1991-92 should be used as the base year.

Three years of test data are needed to evaluate two years of progress because the spring 1993 tests occurred two years before the spring 1995 tests. Students were enrolled for 24 months between the spring 1993 and spring 1995 tests. A three year analysis would measure student progress from spring 1992 to spring 1995.

The UMBC analysis of test scores for two-year students--those enrolled continuously from spring 1993 to spring 1995--differed little from an analysis of all students in EAI-run schools regardless of longevity. Math and reading scores were about 1 point higher for two-year students, a pattern replicated in the other city schools.

Myth: The change in student test scores, rather than actual achievement levels, is the best way to evaluate student achievement.

Fact: Measuring academic achievement based only on change creates a big incentive to keep student achievement low in the early grades. UMBC evaluators criticized using "gain" or "change" scores to measure student achievement because they have "built-in negative bias." As in most urban schools, student achievement in the typical Baltimore school is fairly high in the early grades--often as a result of an early focus on academics and formal testing--and then declines in the later grades. Students in EAI-run schools did not score well in the early grades, thus allowing more room for upward movement in later grades.

Myth: In Baltimore, students in schools run by EAI increased their scores on a state test an average of 67 percent in 1994-95 compared to 1993-94, while students in other Baltimore schools improved by about 22 percent.

Fact: Scores on the MSPAP (Maryland State Performance Assessment Program) increased substantially in 1994-95, EAI's third year, but like the CTBS, this increase represented a recovery from substantial decreases in the first two years.

Third graders at Browne improved from no student performing satisfactorily in math in 1992 to 46 percent in 1995. The vastly improved MSPAP performance at Browne was not replicated in the standardized achievement test scores, where the 1995 third-grade NCE score of 30 represents a 1 NCE decline from the previous year and a 13 NCE decline from 1992, the pre-implementation year. Without figuring Browne school students into the average, the MSPAP results fell from 19 to 14 percent of EAI third graders performing satisfactorily.

Myth: Test scores would have been better except for the labeling and testing of special education children. EAI "mainstreamed" special education students. The UMBC evaluation noted that the inclusion in test score reporting for EAI schools of

students, who in other schools would be identified as special education students and excluded from test reporting, almost certainly accounts for some of the lack of increase in test scores.

Fact: The special education students “mainstreamed” by EAI were not necessarily included in the reporting of test results even though they should have been. While the percentage of students excluded from test results due to their special education status declined from 8 percent to 2 percent under EAI, the total percentage of students excluded from testing for all reasons actually increased in EAI-run schools from 16 percent to 20 percent over the three year period.

I. Controversy Over Student Achievement

In Baltimore, EAI promised dramatic increases in student achievement. And, indeed, EAI reported dramatic improvement in student test scores in August, 1993, after just one year in operation. Late in the second year of the contract, however, the myth of EAI's academic accomplishments was dragged into the sunlight, and it shriveled. Based on data obtained from the school system through a Freedom of Information Act request, the American Federation of Teachers found that academic achievement declined in the EAI schools, while achievement had increased in both a group of control schools and in the system as a whole.

An award-winning investigation by Joe Rigert of the Minneapolis *Star-Tribune* (June 4, 1994) revealed that the dramatically improved test scores reported in August, 1993 turned out to be for a small and unrepresentative group of students. A more typical group of 1,400 EAI students showed no better than normal progress. Experts in the *Star-Tribune* article pointed out that the results were self-generated and not independently evaluated. Documents obtained by the *Star-Tribune* showed that the Computer Curriculum Corporation, whose computer software generated the results, had warned EAI about using the limited results to show dramatic gain. Nevertheless, EAI claimed that the earlier reporting of misleading results was "a misstatement," "unintentional," and "a simple error."

When the poor student achievement data came to light, expectations rapidly changed. Supporters of EAI suddenly wanted to give EAI three years. Some thought five years would be needed. EAI focused attention on the transitional nature of its first year. Insinuations of teacher sabotage emerged. But the effect on test scores of increased teacher-to-pupil ratios, dismantled special education programs, and slashed Chapter 1 programs is obvious. Students in the EAI schools have been subjected to a "transition" that put them behind and reversed a promising upward trend in these schools and the district as a whole.

As it was concluding negotiations in Hartford, EAI tried to keep things quiet in Baltimore by reporting improved test scores for its second year of operation in June, 1994. But in October, 1994, the *Baltimore Sun* reported that test score gains the previous June had been overstated (October 18, 1994). In fact, reading comprehension scores had declined for the second year, and math scores had increased only half as much as claimed in June. Over two years, math and reading scores declined in EAI-run schools while scores improved for control group schools and system-wide. The Baltimore school system accepted the blame for a "simple clerical error" in which 1991 test scores were allegedly mixed up with 1994 scores.

In October, 1994, school officials also revealed that the control group of schools chosen for comparison purposes had been changed, with three higher-scoring schools being replaced by lower-scoring schools. Acceptable evaluation practice requires that control groups remain the same throughout an evaluation,

and substituting lower-scoring schools is an obvious ploy to make the EAI schools look better in comparison.

Some public officials began to talk about terminating the experiment, and Baltimore Mayor Kurt Schmoke linked EAI's future to improved student achievement and the results of an independent evaluation (*Baltimore Sun*, October 21, 1994). One week later, in an October 27 press release, EAI announced "dramatic gains in student attendance of as much as 22.2 percent." Later in the day, however, EAI confessed to a "clerical error," restating the attendance gain as 2.2 percent in one school. Headlines the next day, however, revealed the truth: "EAI Schools Fail to Match Citywide Attendance Gains" (*Baltimore Sun*, October 28, 1994).

In EAI's own analysis of the Baltimore 1993-94 test scores by a panel of current and former educational administrators, EAI dropped the lowest scoring students from the data. One headline read: "Panel Drops Worst Scores; Says Company's City Students Tested Higher" (*Baltimore Sun*, November 16, 1994). Concerns over the integrity of the data were also raised. Accepted testing practice dictates that if student test scores are legitimately problematic (for example, because the student has a handicap or is new to the school), students are either excluded from the testing group before the test is given or their scores are removed before the data analysis, not after results are in.

Baltimore was not the only place EAI battled over test scores. At South Pointe Elementary School in Miami Beach, student test scores over three years were comparable to those of similar public schools. The Dade County Public Schools' evaluation of the program concluded that "South Pointe students did not improve their academic skills beyond what they would have achieved had they attended a regular Dade County public school. . . . it [the EAI program] has yet to show that it can produce educational outcomes superior to those achieved by the regular education program of the DCPS" (Appendix I).

EAI's contractual arrangements at South Pointe differed substantially from those in Baltimore, and consisted essentially of providing teacher training in the implementation of EAI's Tesseract educational program. South Pointe benefited from considerable extra resources, including private funds. As of June, 1993, more than \$1.5 million in donations had been awarded to South Pointe, funds raised by EAI. However, this figure falls considerably short of the \$2.5 million EAI promised to raise for South Pointe. EAI's five-year contract in Dade County ended in June 1995. The school district rejected an EAI offer of a new contract modeled after Baltimore that involved takeover of the budget and noninstructional services (*Miami Herald*, June 10, 1995).

In Baltimore, the independent UMBC evaluation appeared to settle most controversies about measuring student achievement. But just as the contract was being canceled in November 1995, EAI began to leak embargoed data from the state

criterion reference test called the MSPAP ((Maryland State Performance Assessment Program). With no one else having an opportunity to examine the data for another month, EAI asserted that students in schools run by EAI increased their scores on a state test an average of 67 percent in 1994-95 compared to 1993-94 while students in other schools in Baltimore improved by about 22 percent (Appendix A). When the MSPAP data were finally released publicly and examined more closely, the story changed. Scores on the MSPAP (Maryland State Performance Assessment Program), increased substantially in 1994-95, EAI's third year, but like the CTBS, this increase represented a recovery from substantial decreases in the first two years.

EAI also began peddling a multicolored brochure showing that third graders who had spent three years in EAI-run schools had scores on a standardized achievement test rising 6.4 points in math and 4.8 points in reading. Scores for third graders in the rest of the city fell 5.7 points in math, and 4.7 points in reading.

II. EAI Schools Recover Lost Ground On Standardized Student Achievement Tests (CTBS)

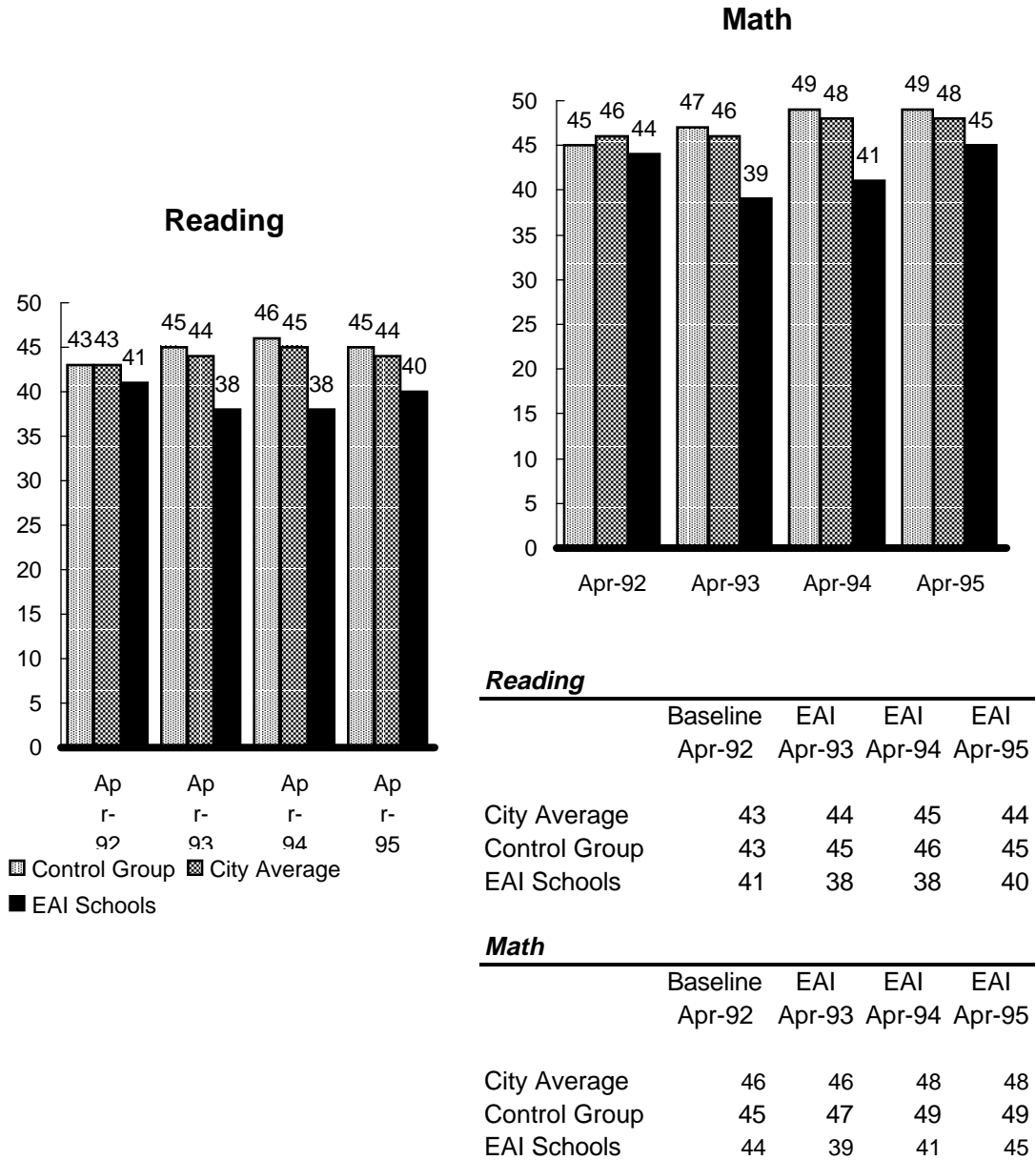
Over the three full years of the contract, CTBS scores for EAI schools decreased and then increased to about the preprogram level (Table 1 and Figure 1). Overall, a one point drop in reading was offset by a one point increase in math. Over the same three years, the city scores improved an average of 2 points in math and 1 point in reading. A group of seven comparison schools similar to the seven EAI-run schools experienced math score increases of 4 points and reading increases of 2 points.

UMBC evaluated only the seven K-5 elementary schools. EAI also ran a middle school and a K-2 center. Data apply to students enrolled in grades 1 to 5 before February 1 of the testing year and who were not Level IV special education students (those served in self-contained classrooms), and who did not have an NCE score of "1". EAI-run schools had many fewer Level IV special education students because EAI placed most special education students in the regular classroom.. An NCE of "1" is the lowest possible score, where NCE's can range from 1 to 99 with a national mean of 50. Without explanation, UMBC employed the unorthodox practice of excluding students receiving the lowest possible score. The effect of both of these exclusions are addressed in subsequent section of this report.(Figure 4 and Table 6) with supporting information in Appendix D and E.

Standardized test scores are presented in Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE's), which place students on a scale of 1 to 99 with a national mean of 50. An NCE change of 0 from one year to the next for a particular student means that the

Figure 1 -- EAI Recovered Initial Student Achievement Declines

CTBS Measured in Normal Curve Equivalents
National Mean Equals 50



Source: UMBC Evaluation..

Table 1
Standardized Achievement Test (CTBS)

	School Number	Math				Reading			
		Normal Curve Equivalent				Normal Curve Equivalent			
		1992	1993	1994	1995	1992	1993	1994	1995
Browne	025	37	30	34	34	34	29	33	30
Edgewood	067	53	50	51	51	52	46	46	47
Graceland Park	240	40	38	47	42	37	37	34	35
Harlem Park	035	43	34	38	38	37	32	31	37
Rodman	204	48	39	40	50	37	38	37	43
Monroe	032	44	40	48	48	39	37	46	45
Roach	073	48	39	40	50	49	41	40	41
EAI Average		44	39	41	45	41	38	38	40
City Average		46	46	48	48	43	44	45	44
Control Group									
Cecil*	007	56	61	62	66	52	54	56	58
Park Heights	014	40	37	43	43	41	37	40	41
Washington	022	41	49	50	47	40	45	50	43
Madison Square*	026	43	48	49	49	37	44	43	42
Brent*	053	51	46	48	44	50	45	48	44
Liberty	064	37	40	39	42	38	40	38	41
Pimlico	223	43	43	45	41	41	42	43	40
Control Group Avg.		45	47	49	49	43	45	46	45
Alex. Hamilton	145	44	35	34	36	40	37	35	35
Rosemont	63	41	37	36	39	41	39	33	37
Templeton	125	38	39	39	45	33	36	35	38
New Control Group Avg.		41	40	41	42	39	40	39	38

Source: Compiled by AFT from UMBC evaluation

- Replaced by Alexander Hamilton, Rosemont, and Templeton to form new control group

Note: Data apply to students enrolled before February 1 of the testing year and who are not Level IV (self-contained) special education students and did not have an NCE score of "1". See text for explanations

student advanced a full grade level over the year. NCE's are similar to percentiles, except that the distribution of test scores is divided in such a way that each NCE is more likely to represent an equal amount of knowledge than is a percentile. Because student scores cluster around the average, it is easier to move from the 45th percentile to the 55th percentile than from the 25th to the 35th. With NCE's however, a movement from 45 to 55 represents about the same amount of knowledge as a movement from 25 to 35. EAI prefers to report standardized test scores as NCE's (see appendix A), partly because NCE's showed a smaller fall off in student achievement than percentiles. For UMBC's explanation of the rationale for using NCE's see Appendix C.

III. Longevity In EAI schools Does Not Contribute to Improved Student Achievement

EAI's glossy pamphlet on student achievement, entitled "Success Stories," uses a single measure of student achievement (Appendix A): change in standardized achievement test scores, measured in NCE's, over the second and third years of the contract, and only for those students enrolled continuously from spring 1993 to spring 1995. The student achievement decline that took place during EAI's first year--from Spring 1992 to spring 1993--is not acknowledged. EAI incorrectly claimed that these data described progress over three years, according to the UMBC evaluators (see Appendix C).

According to the EAI pamphlet, tracking third graders who spent two years in EAI-run schools shows that scores on the CTBS rose 6.4 points in math and 4.8 points in reading. Scores for third graders in the rest of the city fell 5.7 points in math, and 4.7 points in reading (see Appendix A). This advertising implies that students who benefit from an EAI program for a long period of time did better than similar elementary students in the rest of Baltimore.

The UMBC evaluation criticizes the use of gain scores as misleading, and pointed out that calculating progress from spring 1993 to spring 1995 measures progress for the second and third year, but omits the decline in test scores during EAI's first year (see Appendix C):

- UMBC evaluators point out that EAI's "three-year" longitudinal analysis is really a two-year longitudinal study. The base year of 1992-93 used by EAI, fails to capture the decline in scores from spring 1992 to spring 1993 during EAI's first year. The pre-implementation year of 1991-92 should be used as the base year. The "three-year" longitudinal analysis of EAI is really a two-year (p. 112, Appendix C).

Table 2
CTBS Scores of Students Spending Two Years
In the Same School

	Math				Reading			
	Normal Curve Equivalent				Normal Curve Equivalent			
	1992	1993	1994	1995	1992	1993	1994	1995
Grades 2-5								
EAI Average								
Current (a)	c	39	40	43	c	38	37	40
Two-year (b)	c	40	41	44	c	39	38	41
New Control Group								
Current (a)	c	39	39	41	c	39	39	38
Two-year (b)	c	40	39	40	c	39	39	39
City Average								
Current (a)	c	45	47	47	c	43	43	44
Two-year (b)	c	46	48	48	c	44	45	45

Grades 1-5, Current

EAI Average	44	39	41	45	41	38	38	40
New Control Group	41	40	41	42	39	40	39	38
City Average	46	46	48	48	43	44	45	44

Source: Compiled by AFT from UMBC evaluation.

- a. Current grades 2-5 students enrolled by February 1 of testing year, not Level IV special education, and not "1" NCE scores.
- b. Two-year students were enrolled in grades 1-4 on September 1 of preceding school year.
- c. Not calculated by UMBC for pre-EAI year.

- Three years of test data are needed to evaluate two years of progress because the spring 1993 tests occurred two years before the spring 1995 tests. Students were enrolled for 24 months between the spring 1993 and spring 1995 tests. A three year analysis would measure student progress from spring 1992 to spring 1995 and require testing information from 4 different years.
- The UMBC analysis of test scores for these two-year students differed little from an analysis of all students in EAI-run schools regardless of longevity. See Table 2. Math and reading scores were about 1 point higher for two-year students, the same pattern found for other city schools in Baltimore (p. 33, Appendix D).
- UMBC evaluators criticized using “gain” or “change” scores to measure student achievement because they have “built-in negative bias.” (p. 110, Appendix C). As in most urban schools, student achievement in the typical Baltimore school is fairly high in the early grades--often as a result of an early focus on academics and formal testing--and then declines in the later grades. Students in EAI-run schools did not score well in the early grades, thus allowing more room for upward movement in later grades. Measuring academic achievement based only on change creates a big incentive to keep student achievement low in the early grades.

Table 2 compares the CTBS scores of “current “ students (enrolled since February 1 of the current school year) in grades 2-5 to “two-year” students (enrolled in grades 1-4 on September 1 of the previous school year and now enrolled in grades 2-5). Two-year students generally do about 1 point better in EAI-run schools, city schools, and comparison schools.

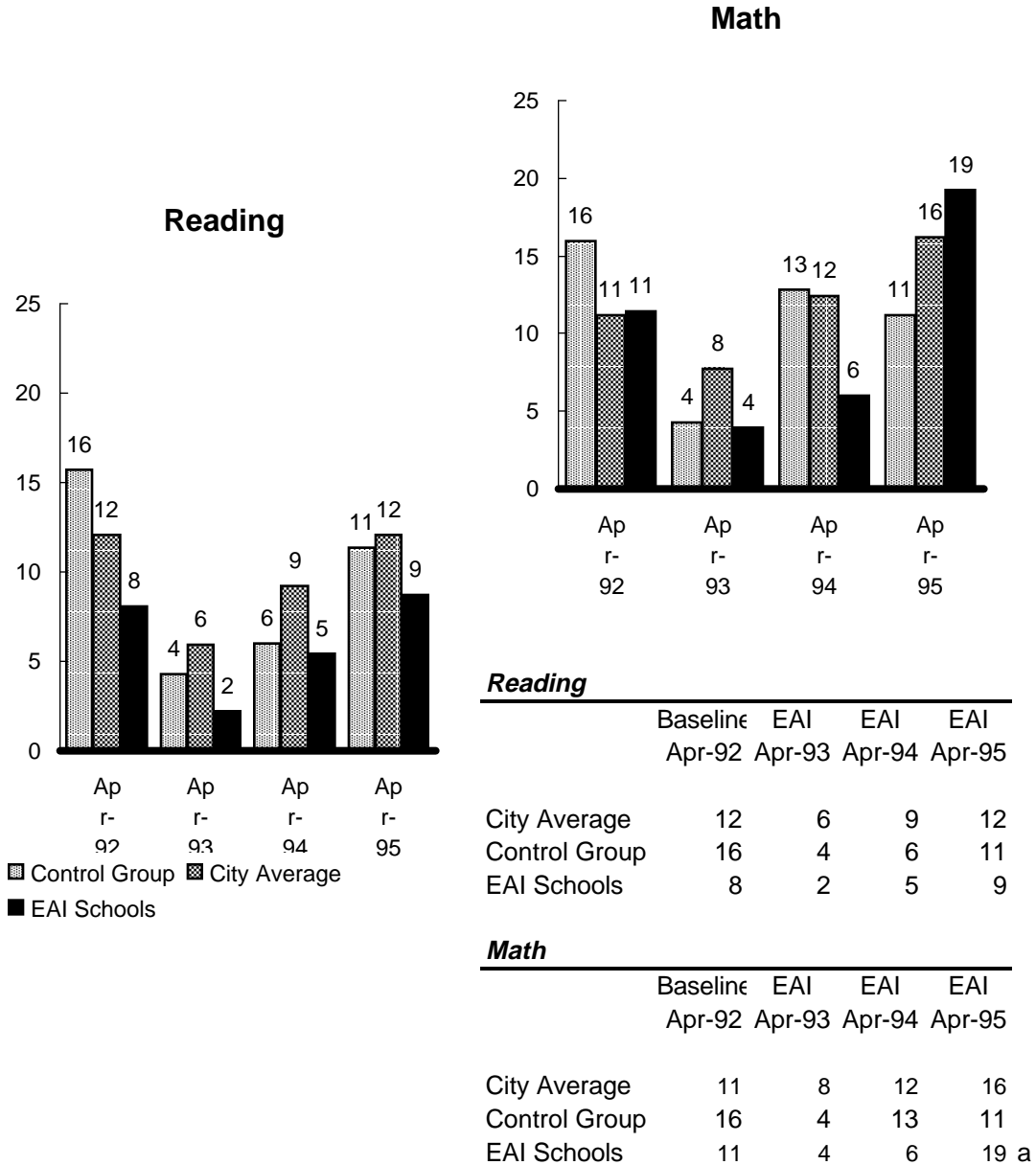
IV. Performance of EAI Schools Reflect City Trends on State Criterion-Referenced Test (MSPAP)

Statewide tests, known as the Maryland State Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP) are designed to assess how well students apply classroom information to real-life situations. These data replace multiple choice questions with “tests” that require students do such things as write essays and draw graphs. Exercises often involve group work, and individual scores may reflect the work of the group. The state encourages schools and districts to “teach to the test”, and it is possible to devote extra resources to the third- and fifth-grade students. Individual students’ scores are divided into five performance levels, with the most attention given to “satisfactory performance.”

The MSPAP’s are given to third and fifth graders in the late spring, and since the assessments are scored by people rather than machines, the results are

Figure 2 -- MSPAP Grade 3

Percent of Students Performing Satisfactorily



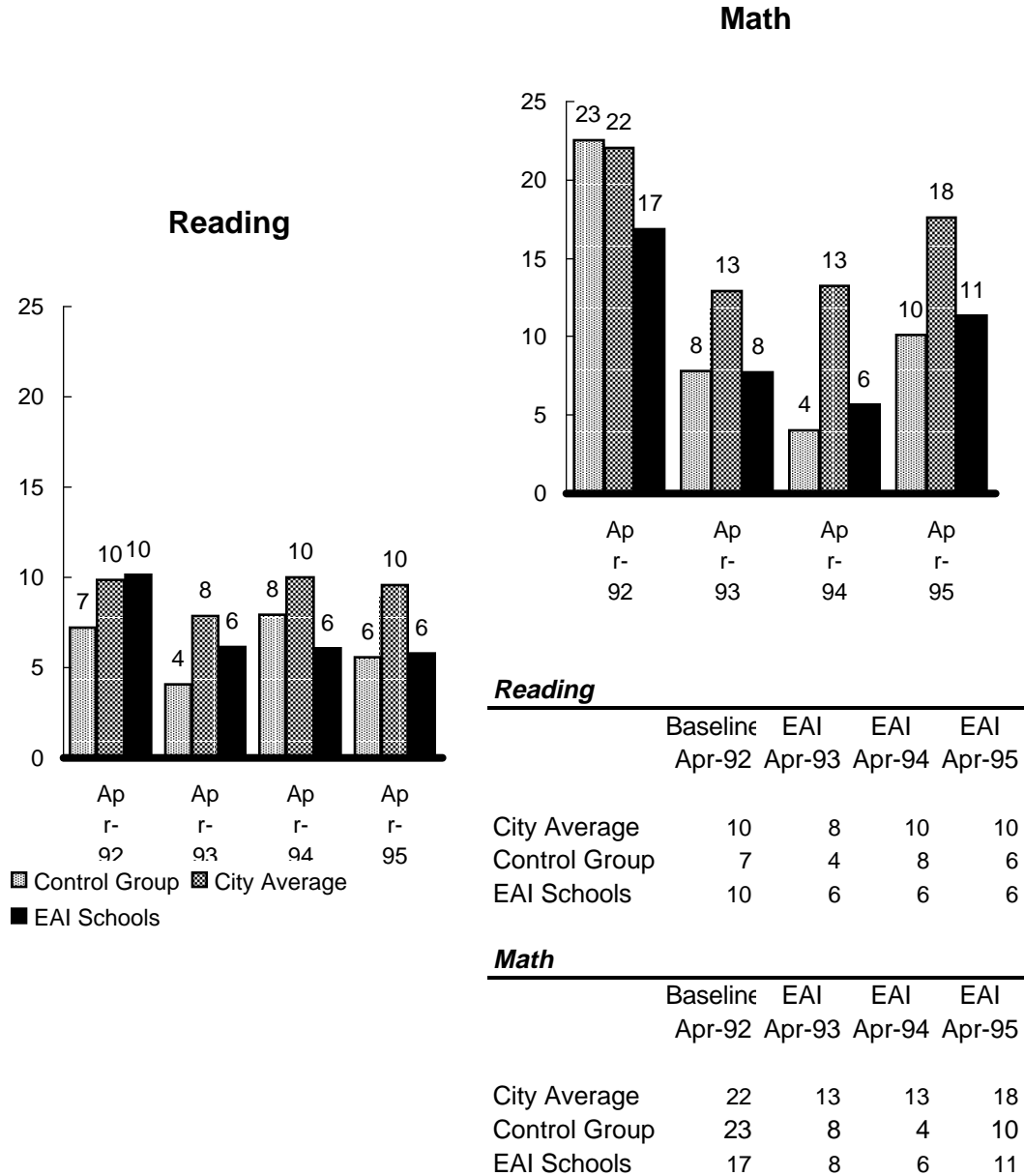
Source: Compiled by AFT from data provided by BCPS, the UMBC evaluation, and the Baltimore Sun (Dec. 18, 1995)

a. Excluding Browne, the other six schools averaged 14.3.

Note: MSPAP is the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program. This test was revised between the 1992 and 1993 administrations. Change in individual school scores should be evaluated only in comparison with the change in the school district average.

Figure 3 -- MSPAP Grade 5

Percent of Students Performing Satisfactorily



Source: Compiled by AFT from data provided by BCPS, the UMBC evaluation, and the Baltimore Sun (Dec. 18, 1995).

Note: MSPAP is the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program. This test was revised between the 1992 and 1993 administrations. Change in individual school scores should be evaluated only in comparison with the change in the school district average.

Table 3
Criterion-Referenced Test (MSPAP)--Grade 3

(Percentage of students at or above satisfactory level)

School Name	Math				Reading				
	% Satisfactory				% Satisfactory				
	1992	1993	1994	1995	1992	1993	1994	1995	
Browne	0.0	0.0	15.4	45.7	a	3.2	4.7	10.3	7.1
Edgewood	30.4	8.0	14.5	10.7		24.1	4.0	10.1	10.7
Graceland Park	15.4	1.5	5.9	10.9		0.0	1.5	0.0	4.7
Harlem Park	0.0	0.0	3.8	14.3		5.3	0.0	2.5	12.1
Rodman	1.7	0.0	2.2	4.3		6.1	1.0	4.4	6.5
Monroe	15.0	0.0	0.0	14.3		5.0	3.1	3.4	4.8
Roach	17.4	18.3	0.0	34.3		13.0	1.4	7.5	14.9
EAI Average	11.4	4.0	6.0	19.2	a	8.1	2.2	5.5	8.7
City Average	11.2	7.8	12.4	16.2		12.1	5.9	9.2	12.1
Control Group									
Cecil*	39.4	3.6	35.0	25.6		27.7	3.6	7.0	28.9
Park Heights	2.1	0.0	2.6	4.8		4.3	0.0	5.3	4.9
Washington	19.1	11.9	8.2	25.0		8.5	13.4	6.1	17.5
Madison Square*	3.2	2.7	2.8	1.2		3.2	1.3	4.2	14.6
Brent*	32.4	2.6	25.4	12.1		39.4	5.1	4.5	6.1
Liberty	7.5	0.0	8.6	4.3		14.0	1.4	5.4	4.3
Pimlico	7.8	9.2	7.1	5.2		13.0	5.3	9.4	3.1
Control Group Avg	15.9	4.3	12.8	11.2		15.7	4.3	6.0	11.3
Alex. Hamilton	37.2	0.0	0.0	4.3		16.7	1.3	4.8	5.8
Rosemont	8.2	31.7	17.2	20.8		1.6	3.2	13.8	12.5
Templeton	2.9	0.0	0.0	12.9		5.7	1.6	0.0	6.5

Source: Compiled by AFT from data provided by BCPS, the UMBC evaluation, and the Baltimore Sun (Dec. 18, 1995).

a. Excluding Browne, the other six schools average 14.8.

* Replaced by Alexander Hamilton, Rosemont, and Templeton to form new control group

Note: MSPAP is the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program. This test was revised between the 1992 and 1993 administrations. Change in individual school scores should be evaluated only in comparison with the change in the school district

Table 4
Criterion-Referenced Test (MSPAP)--Grade 5

(Percentage of students at or above satisfactory level)

	Math				Reading			
	% Satisfactory				% Satisfactory			
	1992	1993	1994	1995	1992	1993	1994	1995
Browne	16.7	5.1	9.5	10.3	16.7	0.0	7.1	5.1
Monroe	6.9	11.4	10.3	28.6	20.7	8.6	0.0	0.0
Harlem Park	5.3	5.9	2.7	2.9	4.0	0.0	2.7	4.3
Edgewood	3.4	20.3	5.2	10.0	10.2	15.3	11.7	8.3
Roach	42.6	7.7	2.0	1.7	8.8	10.8	9.8	6.7
Rodman	12.7	0.9	9.8	22.2	4.9	5.6	5.9	9.1
Graceland Park	30.6	2.9	0.0	3.6	5.6	2.9	5.1	7.1
EAI Average	16.9	7.7	5.6	11.3	10.1	6.2	6.0	5.8
City Average	22.0	12.9	13.2	17.6	9.8	7.8	10.0	9.6
Control Group								
Cecil*	22.8	5.9	3.4	12.8	8.9	4.9	6.9	7.0
Park Heights	4.0	0.0	0.0	5.6	0.0	4.4	17.5	8.3
Washington	17.8	16.7	11.4	29.2	8.9	10.0	4.5	8.3
Madison Square*	10.5	6.7	5.0	1.1	5.3	4.0	3.3	3.4
Brent*	36.1	5.0	0.0	13.7	16.4	1.7	13.0	3.9
Liberty	30.3	0.0	2.4	4.3	6.7	1.1	8.2	2.9
Pimlico	36.1	20.5	5.9	4.1	4.2	2.3	2.0	5.4
Control Group Avg	22.5	7.8	4.0	10.1	7.2	4.1	7.9	5.6
Alex. Hamilton	22.2	1.4	0.0	1.6	4.8	4.1	2.9	3.3
Rosemont	24.6	20.3	3.4	0.0	7.0	0.0	1.7	2.0
Templeton	4.1	4.8	0.0	10.3	2.0	4.8	6.0	2.6

Source: Compiled by AFT from data provided by BCPS, the UMBC evaluation, and the Baltimore Sun (Dec. 18, 1995).

* Replaced by Alexander Hamilton, Rosemont, and Templeton to form new control group.

Note: MSPAP is the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program. This test was revised between the 1992 and 1993 administrations. Change in individual school scores should be evaluated only in comparison with the change in the school district average.

released several months later. The UMBC evaluation, first released in August 1995, did not have the spring 1995 MSPAP data. Finally released to the public on December 12, 1995, the spring 1995 data have been a big part of EAI's effort to shield its record of no progress in academic achievement. Just as the Baltimore contract was being canceled in November, EAI began to leak MSPAP results, which were embargoed until the middle of December.

With no one else, including reporters, able to access the embargoed MSPAP data, EAI declared that students in schools run by EAI raised their scores an average of 67 percent in 1994-95 over 1993-94 while students in other schools in Baltimore improved by about 22 percent (Appendix B). Another version of the data EAI put out indicated that 88 percent of EAI schools improved compared to only 63 percent of Baltimore schools (Appendix A). The 88 percent figure means that 7 of 8 EAI-runs schools showed some improvement. Some media reports misreported the data as an 88 percent improvement in student achievement, or an improvement for 88 percent of the students.

A close look at the more detailed MSPAP data indicates that scores did increase substantially in 1994-95, EAI's third year. Like the CTBS, however, this increase represented a recovery from substantial decreases in the first two years of the contract (Figures 2 and 3 and Tables 3 and 4) and was not as dramatic as EAI claimed:

- Third grade reading. Only 12 percent of city elementary students read at the satisfactory level in both 1992 and 1995. EAI schools improved from 8 percent to 9 percent.
- Third grade math. In all city schools, the percentage of students performing at the satisfactory level rose from 11 to 16 percent;. At EAI-run schools, the comparable figure increased from 11 to 19 percent.
- Fifth grade reading. Only 10 percent of city elementary students read at the satisfactory level in both 1992 and 1995, but in EAI-run schools the comparable figure dropped from 10 percent to 6 percent.
- Fifth grade math. In all city schools, the percentage of students performing at the satisfactory level fell from 22 to 18 percent. At EAI-run schools the comparable figure decreased from 17 to 11 percent.

V. MSPAP Gains Did Not Match CTBS Gains In Many Schools

Over the three years of EAI management, fifth graders in EAI-run schools did no better, probably worse, than other city schools. MSPAP results for third

Table 5
MSPAP and CTBS Comparison--Math

	MSPAP				CTBS				One-Year	Three-Year			
	% Satisfactory				Normal Curve Equivalent				Change	Change			
	1992	1993	1994	1995	1992	1993	1994	1995	1994-1995	1992-1995	MSPA	CTBS	
Third Grade Math													
Browne	0.0	0.0	15.4	45.7	a	43	29	31	30	30.3	-1	45.7	-13
Edgewood	30.4	8.0	14.5	10.7		53	46	46	47	-3.8	1	-19.7	-6
Graceland Park	15.4	1.5	5.9	10.9		44	38	39	45	5.0	6	-4.5	1
Harlem Park	0.0	0.0	3.8	14.3		37	34	42	52	10.5	10	14.3	15
Rodman	1.7	0.0	2.2	4.3		41	35	45	44	2.1	-1	2.6	3
Monroe	15.0	0.0	0.0	14.3		43	30	37	51	14.3	14	-0.7	8
Roach	17.4	18.3	0.0	34.3		56	41	37	51	34.3	14	16.9	-5
EAI Average	11.4	4.0	6.0	19.2	a	45	37	41	45	13.2	4	7.8	0
City Average	11.2	7.8	12.4	16.2		44	44	47	46	3.8	-1	5.0	2
Fifth Grade Math													
Browne	16.7	5.1	9.5	10.3		40	36	40	39	0.8	-1	-6.4	-1
Edgewood	6.9	11.4	10.3	28.6		42	66	43	46	18.3	3	21.7	4
Graceland Park	5.3	5.9	2.7	2.9		36	36	41	37	0.2	-4	-2.4	1
Harlem Park	3.4	20.3	5.2	10.0		41	38	32	32	4.8	0	6.6	-9
Rodman	42.6	7.7	2.0	1.7		43	45	40	48	-0.3	8	-40.9	5
Monroe	12.7	0.9	9.8	22.2		46	39	41	48	12.4	7	9.5	2
Roach	30.6	2.9	0.0	3.6		49	44	42	40	3.6	-2	-27.0	-9
EAI Average	16.9	7.7	5.6	11.3		43	44	40	42	5.7	2	-5.6	-1
City Average	22.0	12.9	13.2	17.6		46	46	47	48	4.4	1	-4.4	2

Source: Compiled by AFT from data provided by BCPS, the UMBC evaluation, and the Baltimore Sun (Dec. 18, 1995).

a. Excluding Browne, the other six schools average 14.8.

grade math, however, seemed to be a strong point of the EAI program. The percentage of students performing satisfactorily improved from 6 percent to 19 percent in the third year of the program after a drop from 11 percent in the pre-implementation year of 1991-92. However, most of the gain over the three-year period occurred at a single school.

As shown in Table 5, third graders at Raynor Browne elementary school improved from no student performing satisfactorily in 1992 to 46 percent in 1995. On this measure, Browne ranked in the top ten of about 120 elementary schools in Baltimore. Only one other EAI school had more than 16 percent of its students--the city average--reach the satisfactory level. But the vastly improved MSPAP performance at Browne was not replicated in the standardized achievement test scores, where the 1995 third-grade NCE score of 30 represent a 1 NCE decline from the previous year and a 13 percent decline from 1992, the pre-implementation year. Without figuring Browne school students into the average, the MSPAP results fell from 19 to 14 of EAI third graders performing satisfactorily.

Across all 7 schools, the percentage of third-grade students scoring satisfactorily on the MSPAP rose from 11 to 19 percent, while the standardized achievement test score remained even at 45 percent.

VI. Despite Inclusion Model of Special Education, EAI Excluded More Students From Testing Than Other Schools

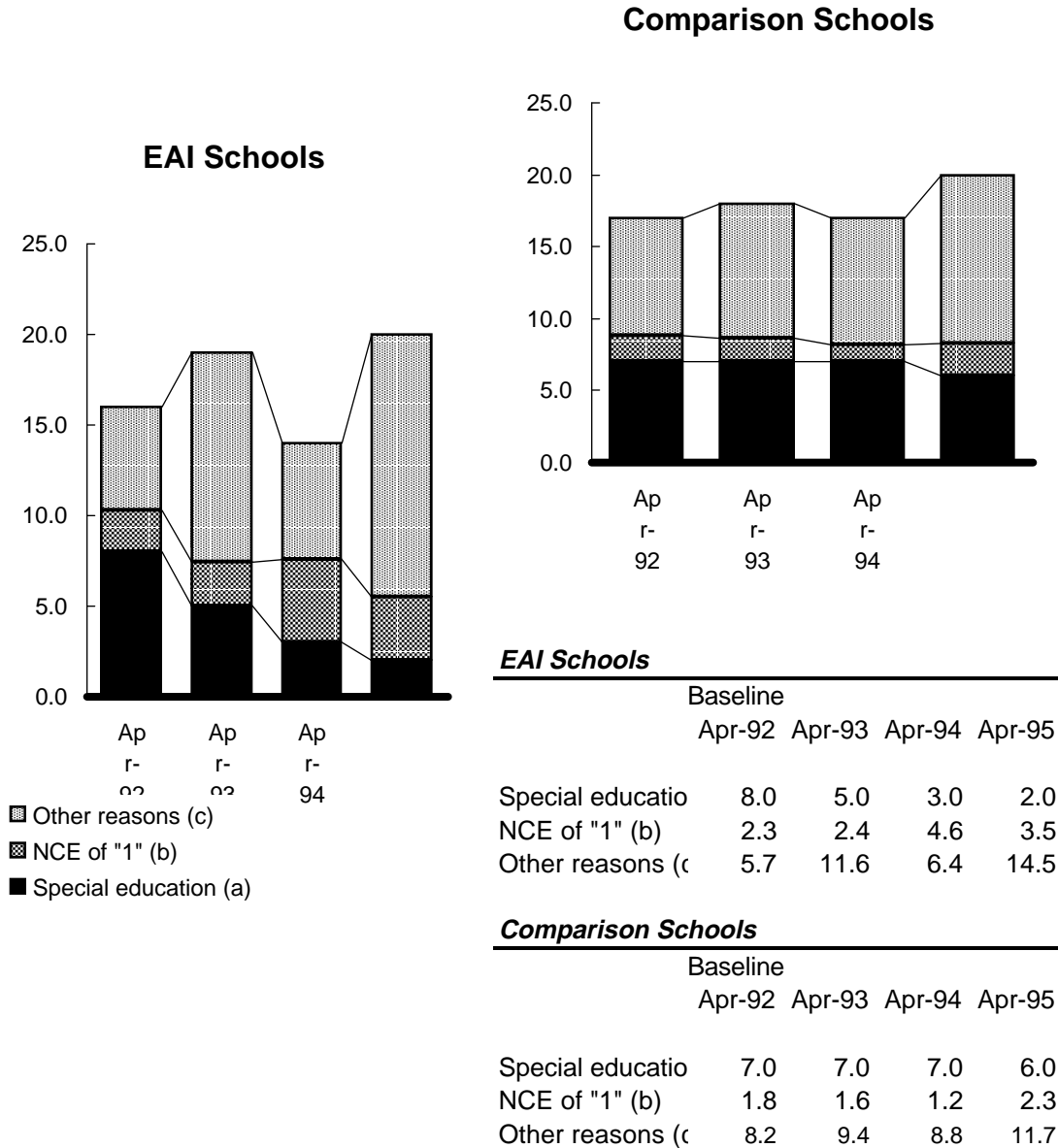
UMBC did not evaluate special education programs. Nevertheless, one of the most quoted sentences in the UMBC evaluation refers to EAI's policy of cutting the number of students receiving Level IV special education services (self-contained classrooms). "This aspect of the Tesseract program, if eventually judged successful, may be EAI's shining contribution to urban education" (UMBC, p 117). The least quoted sentence of the UMBC evaluation follows that glowing accolade: "However, the program needs careful evaluation to determine whether the students who otherwise would have been identified as eligible for Level IV special education services have been well-served."

Level IV students are not counted in the standardized testing results. The UMBC evaluators concluded that to the extent that the "included" students depressed test scores, "EAI has paid a great public relations cost for the decrease in the number of students eligible for special education services" (UMBC, p 117).

EAI's shift of special education children from self-contained classrooms, where their test scores are not reported, to regular classrooms where their scores count, should contribute to a higher percentage of students for whom scores are reported and to lower school averages. However, the special education students "mainstreamed" by EAI were not necessarily included in the reporting of test

Figure 4 -- Students Without Reported CTBS Scores

Percent of Year-End Enrollment



Source: UMBC evaluation.

a. Percentage of students eligible for Level IV special education services in grades 1 through 5. Level IV represents at least 3 hours of specialized instruction daily, usually provided in self-contained classrooms.

b. Number of "1" scores on the CTBS Reading test for students enrolled before February 1 of the testing year and not Level IV special education.

c. Absent, enrolled after February 1, or an unexplained reason.

Table 6
Students Excluded From CTBS Reporting

	1992	1993	1994	1995
Students with CTBS Scores (a)				
EAI Average	84%	82%	86%	80%
Old Control Group	83%	83%	83%	81%
New Control Group	83%	81%	82%	75%
City Average	82%	82%	81%	80%
Level IV Special Education Students (b)				
EAI Average	8%	5%	3%	2%
Old Control Group	7%	7%	7%	6%
New Control Group	7%	8%	8%	7%
City Average	8%			6%
Test Takers With NCEs of "1" (c)				
EAI	2.3%	2.4%	4.6%	3.5%
Old Control Group	1.8%	1.6%	1.2%	2.3%
New Control Group	2.7%	2.7%	3.9%	3.7%
Not Tested For Other Reasons (d)				
EAI	5.7%	10.6%	6.4%	14.5%
Old Control Group	8.2%	8.4%	8.8%	10.7%
New Control Group	7.3%	8.3%	6.1%	14.3%
Enrollment, Grades 1-5 (e)				
EAI	2,581	2,645	2,524	2,427
Old Control Group	3,121	3,026	2,886	2,809
New Control Group	2,872	2,783	2,674	2,515

Source: Compiled by AFT from UMBC evaluation.

a. Percentage of Grade 1 through 5 students for whom CTBS total reading scores were reported.

b. Percentage of students eligible for Level IV special education services in grades 1 through 5. Level IV represents at least 3 hours of specialized instruction daily, usually provided in self-contained

c. Number of "1" scores on the CTBS reading test for students enrolled before February 1 of the testing

d. Absent, enrolled after February 1, or an unexplained reason.

e. Year-end enrollment of students in grades 1-5.

results. While the percentage of students excluded from test results due to their special education status declined from 8 percent to 2 percent under EAI, the percentage of students excluded from testing actually increased in EAI-run schools from 16 percent in 1992 to 20 percent in 1995 (Figure 4 and Table 6).

As the percentage of Level IV special education students declined in EAI-run schools, the percentage of students with NCE's of "1" increased. The predictable effect was summarized in a *Baltimore Sun* (October 28, 1994) headline: "Panel Drops Worst Scores; Say's Company's City Students Tested Higher."

On standardized tests, 1 in 100 students will get an NCE of "1". In low-scoring schools, more than one percent of students could get an NCE of "1". If mainstreamed retarded students are included in the testing program, the percentage of students with NCE's of "1" could escalate even more. Students also get NCE's of "1" if they hand in a blank score sheet, fill out the wrong sections on the test form, or mark answers with pens or pencils that scoring machines cannot read (although these tests usually specify a number 2 lead pencil, the scoring machines can read a wide variety of pen, pencil, and even crayon marks). EAI frequently insinuated that the higher percentage of students with NCE's of "1" was a product of sabotage by some teachers.

Appendix a

How EAI Sells Its Record On Student Achievement

This appendix contains copies of: 1) EAI's brochure titled, "Success Stories: Student Performance, Parent and Teacher Satisfaction", 2) PR Newswire story of December 12, 1995 EAI press release, and 3) a chart of MSPAP results distributed by EAI in Baltimore the night the Baltimore contract was officially canceled.

Appendix B

Newspaper Reports of EAI's Claim to Improved Student Performance

This appendix contains: 1) the article, “Why Schools Flunk Ed Reform,” (Investor’s Business Daily, December 112, 1995) published the same day as the official release of the MSPAP scores, and 2) the Hartford Courant (December 18, 1995) editorial, “EAI Should Be Paid”.

Appendix c

Issues Related to “Test Scores”

In the UMBC Evaluation

This section of the UMBC evaluation deals with several critical testing issues including: 1) Percentage of students represented by scores, 2) Stability of students, 3) General decline in scores over grades, 4) Gain scores, 5) gain scores in relation to the base year, 6) “Three-year matched scores” versus “two-year students”, 7) Comparison of NCE scores and percentile scores, and 8) the practice effect of fall testing.

Appendix d

Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS)-- Math and Reading Totals by Grade

This appendix contains Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) math and reading totals by grade for: 1) Tesseract schools, 2) comparison schools (new group), and 3) all Baltimore elementary schools. These Data also include the number of students tested by grade and averages for each of the three groups of schools enumerated above regarding scores for grades 1-5, grades 2-5, and the percentage of students with reported tests.

The last page of this appendix contains similar testing data for “two-year students”-students in grades 2-5 who were enrolled in Tesseract schools on September 1 of the previous school year.

Appendix e

Special Education Enrollment and the Number of “1” Scores on the CTBS

This appendix contains the percentage of students receiving special education services--Level IV services (self-contained classrooms) in particular--in Tesseract schools, comparison schools, and all city elementary schools for 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995. These data were reported in the UMBC evaluation.

The appendix also contains a table with information on the number of “1” scores on the reading part of the CTBS for Tesseract schools, and both groups of control schools.

On standardized tests, 1 in 100 students will get an NCE of “1”. In low-scoring schools, more than one percent of students could get an NCE of “1”. If mainstreamed retarded students are included in the testing program, the percentage of students with NCE’s of “1” could escalate even more. Students also get NCE’s of “1” if they hand in a blank score sheet, fill out the wrong sections on the test form, or mark answers with pens or pencils that scoring machines cannot read.

Appendix f

CTBS Math and Reading Scores by School and Grade

This appendix contains Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) math and reading totals by school and grade for: 1) Tesseract schools, 2) comparison schools (new group), and 3) all Baltimore elementary schools. These Data also include the number of students tested by grade and averages for each of the three groups of schools enumerated above regarding scores for grades 1-5, grades 2-5, and the percentage of students with reported tests.

These data were reported in the UMBC evaluation.

Appendix g Maryland State Performance

Assessment Program (MSPAP) Results--School Level Data

This appendix contains 1994 and 1995 MSPPAP math, reading, science, and writing totals for all schools in Baltimore.

These data were reported in the *Baltimore Sun*, December 18, 1995. Text of the article, "Test Scores for City Show Improvement" is also included.

Appendix h EAI's Impact on Instruction, Facilities, Technology, Safety, Staff

Development and Parent Involvement

This summary of the UMBC evaluation is reproduced from the AFT publication, *How Private Mangers Make Money in Public Schools: Update on the EAI Experiment in Baltimore* published in September, 1995.

Appendix I Newspaper Accounts of EAI Contract Terminations

“School Ends Experiment,” *Miami Herald*, June 20, 1995.

‘City School Board Ends Efforts to Privatize,” *Baltimore Sun*, November 30, 1995.

“Hartford Plans to End Private Management of Public Schools,” *New York Times*,
January 24, 1996.